

469, Bathing IE rivers, springs, and public bath houses. In the fifteenth century it became the custom to bathe in rivers or at mineral springs. Wealth, luxury, fashion, and new forms of vice attended this change.¹ The convents of the fifteenth century are described as places of debauch.² An English globe trotter of the beginning of the seventeenth century describes the baths of Baden near Zurich, where the old custom of the sexes bathing together had been modified somewhat, but only for married women.³ If the custom of bathing together does not still exist throughout Northern Europe, it must have been abolished within a few years. Retzius⁴ describes it as existing in Finland in 1878, and many travelers have described the village bath houses of Northern Russia and Scandinavia. Retzius says that the bath house is a kind of sanctuary. Any misdemeanor committed there is considered far more wicked than the same fault elsewhere. Here we see the mores raising a special conventionalization to protect a custom which is expedient, but which transgresses the usual taboo. The fact is that the complete taboo on nudity in Central

Europe is not over two centuries old. By itself, nudity was not regarded as shameful or indecent. Therefore in the bath, where it was in order, it was disregarded, just as now a workmen's dress, an athlete's dress, or a bathing dress is disregarded. During the centuries when the ecclesiastical authorities endeavored in vain to stop the sexes from bathing together, it must be that public opinion did not recognize in that usage any serious evil which called for repression. The English now express surprise that the sexes at American watering places go into the sea together, to which Americans attach no importance at all. If Americans bathed in English bathing dresses the sexes would speedily separate.

470. Nudity. In early Christian drama Christ was represented by a naked youth. Then he was represented by a youth who wore a breech cloth only. In the sixteenth century, at Naples, in a representation of the creation of Adam and Eve, the actors

¹ Schultz, *D. Z.*, 136.

² Dulaure, *Hist. de Paris*, 268; Schultz, *D. Z.*, 277, 283; cf. Janssen, VIII, 391.

⁸ Coryate's *Crudities*, II, 244.

⁴ *Finska Kranier*, 118.